

Mr. ADERHOLT, Alabama,
Mr. PENCE, Indiana.

STABBING VETERANS IN THE BACK

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is National Salute to Hospital Veterans Week, and just on Sunday I had the opportunity to visit my veterans hospital in our community in Houston, visiting veterans and speaking to them and thanking them for their service.

Mr. Speaker, not one of them, not one of them had one moment of regret for the service to their Nation. That is why I stand here today to read the words of Al Marlowe, the 75-year-old, eighty district commander for 17 Houston-area American Legion posts: "It's a stab in the back," he says. "It's a stab in the back," says Marlowe, 75, a Korean War veteran. "This is what they do behind closed doors in Washington if you want the real truth."

It is a stab in the back because we have cut veterans benefits. We are asking them to enhance the copay of veterans who have served this country.

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When they served, we promised them benefits for life. It seems a shame on this House if we cannot come together and establish priorities and begin to give back to veterans who have given to this Nation.

This is a national salute to veterans who are hospitalized, Mr. Speaker, but there are many more veterans who come to outpatient clinics at veterans hospitals all over America. It is time to stop stabbing them in the back and provide them the lifetime benefit for serving this country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DAWSON COMMUNITY FAMILY PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

(Mr. CUMMINGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to announce the fact that I introduce tonight the Dawson Community Family Protection Act of 2005.

In my district in Baltimore, unfortunately, about 2 years ago we had a family of seven incinerated in the middle of the night because they wanted to cooperate with the police, and drug thugs made a decision that they would burn them up instead of allowing them to cooperate with the police.

The Dawson Family Community Protection Act would require the director of National Drug Control Policy to direct each year a minimum of \$5 million in HIDTA funds to support HIDTA initiatives aimed at increasing safety and encouraging cooperation in neighborhoods like the Dawson's.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

SMART SECURITY AND IRAQ'S ELECTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am beginning to lose count of the number of reasons why we went to war in Iraq. First it was because Saddam Hussein was closely linked to al Qaeda, the terrorist group that conducted the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11.

After that theory was disproved, the reason for going to war became the imminent and immediate threat that Saddam posed to the United States. According to the White House, Saddam possessed stockpiles of nuclear and biological weapons.

When we learned that Saddam's nuclear weapons program had actually been dismantled after the 1991 Gulf War, which was a full 12 years ago when the U.S. began its first invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration changed its rationale yet again. This time the reason for going to war was for the very cause of democracy itself, to bring democracy to the Iraqi people.

Some have said that Iraq's recent elections are the very embodiment of Iraq's quick embrace of democracy. It is important right now to commend the brave 58 percent of registered Iraqis who voted in these elections, voted to select the legislators who will write the Iraqi constitution.

In fact, Iraq's voter turnout was higher than the turnout in most American elections. Believe me, the people who live in my congressional district, Marin and Sonoma Counties, north of San Francisco, across the Golden Gate Bridge, know how important elections are to keeping a viable and vital democracy in a country. In last November's election, we voted with a record 89.5 percent of registered voters turning out.

Sadly, despite Iraq's elections, the Middle East is as unstable as it has ever been. The war in Iraq has made Iraq a more violent and unstable place, making America less secure from the threat of terrorism by creating a terrorist breeding ground in a country that had never been a haven for terrorist groups like al Qaeda in the first place.

Some members of the Bush administration have expressed their disappointment with the high Shiite turnout of Iraq's elections, fearing that significant participation by religious Muslims may lead to the creation of an overly religious Iraqi constitution, but

that is the danger, the danger risked by invading a country when you will not admit the real reason you are there in the first place.

Are we there to stabilize Iraq so we can control their oil resources? Are we there to force our notions of democracy onto the Iraqi people? Or are we there to honor the Iraqi voters, voters who went to the polls because they want to control their own destiny?

The most important thing to recognize is that Iraq will not resemble the United States, and Iraq's constitution will not be an updated version of our own. Mr. Speaker, it has become clear that we cannot keep our troops stationed halfway around the world with the hope that Iraq will become a Middle Eastern version of the United States.

But the elections do demonstrate that the Iraqi people are prepared to manage their own affairs. That is why, now that Iraq's elections are completed, the United States must ensure that the people of Iraq control their own affairs as the country transitions towards democracy.

We can do this by supporting the Iraqi people, not through our military, but through international cooperation to help rebuild Iraq's economic and physical infrastructure.

We owe this to the people of Iraq, who are being killed by the thousands. We owe it to our troops who are sitting ducks for the terrorists, and we owe it to the nearly 1,500 American troops who have died in this ill-conceived misadventure, as well as the 11,000 who have been severely wounded.

To help the situation in Iraq, I have introduced H. Con. Res. 35, which is legislation that will help Iraq secure its own future and ensure that America's role in Iraq actually does make America safer. So far, 27 of my House colleagues have signed on as cosponsors of this important legislation.

My plan for Iraq is part of a larger strategy that I call SMART security, which is a Sensible Multilateral American Response to Terrorism that will ensure America's security by relying on smarter politics.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear; we should not abandon Iraq. There is still a critical role for the United States in providing the developmental aid that can help create a robust civil society, build schools and water processing plants, and ensure that Iraq's economic infrastructure becomes fully viable.

Instead of troops, we need to send scientists, educators, urban planners and constitutional experts to help rebuild Iraq's flagging economic and physical infrastructure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)